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Message Text

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TO USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 061888

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE FROM BOGOTA APR 2

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 2615

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SNAR CO
SUBJECT: NARCOTICS PROGRAM FOR COLOMBIA

STATE 57318 AND PREVIOUS

1. EMBASSY APPRECIATES QUESTIONS RAISED BY INTER- AGENCY NARCOTICS CONTROL COMMITTEE. WE HOPE FOLLOWING BRIEF RESPONSES MAY BE OF ASSISTANCE TO COMMITTEE' S DELIBERATIONS.

2. NATIONAL POLICE HAVE DEVELOPED A NARCOTICS ACTION PLAN WHICH TAKES INTO CONSIDERATION ALL RESOURCES AVAILABLE IN A TOTAL FORCE APPROACH TO NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT AND ALSO AN OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR THE RECENTLY ESTABLISHED NARCOTICS UNIT. BOTH OF THESE PLANS ARE IN THE PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTATION; LACK OF EQUIPMENT IS ONE OF THE PRIME LIMITING FACTORS IN ACHIEVING DESIRED GOALS. COPIES OF THESE PLANS ARE AVAILABLE AT AID/ OPS. NATIONAL POLICE ARE PREPARED TO PUT THIS EQUIPMENT TO WORK EFFECTIVELY UPON ITS ARRIVAL. WE HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE ABILITY OF THE NATIONAL POLICE AND BASED OUR RECOMMENDATIONS IN OUR EVALUATION THAT THE EQUIPMENT WOULD BE FULLY UTILIZED PROMPTLY AND THAT MAINTENANCE
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WOULD BE ASSURED. WE ARE CONFIDENT NATIONAL POLICE PLANNING FOR FUTURE IS SOUND AND REALISTIC.

3. ALL OF THE RADIO EQUIPMENT PROPOSED IS PORTABLE WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SOME REPEATERS. PRESENT NATIONAL POLICE PORTABLE EQUIPMENT IS ANTIQUATED, INSUFFICIENT AND ON THE ALREADY OVERCROWDED VHF BAND. PROPOSED RADIO QEUIPMENT WOULD BE DEVOTED EXCLUSIVELY TO NARCOTICS
ENFORCEMENT. IT WOULD BE ON ONE UHF BAND AND WOULD NET WITH SMALL NUMBER OF PORTABLE RADIOS ALREADY ON ORDER. DUE TO ABOVEMENTIONED CONDITIONS, OVERCROWDED BAND, ETC., FUTURE PLANS CALL FOR CONVERSION
OF
NATIONAL POLICE URBAN RADIO NETS TO UHF. PROPOSED RADIO SYSTEM WOULD,
AT THIS TIME, BE SEPARATE, BUT A PART OF NATIONAL POLICE RADIO COMMUNICATIONS WITH EXPANDED COMPATABILITY AS FUTURE PLANS ARE MET. THIS PLAN HAS BEEN VETTED BY THE USAID' S TECHNICAL EXPERT.

4. WITH EMBASSY ASSISTANCE, COLOMBIAN CUSTOMS HAS DEVELOPED A DETAILED PLAN FOR NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT. THIS PLAN IS EXPECTED TO BE APPROVED BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF CUSTOMS AND SUBMITTED TO THE
NATIONAL NARCOTICS COORDINATOR WITHIN THE NEXT TWO WEEKS. MOST INDICATIONS ARE THAT CUSTOMS, IN SPITE OF ITS PROBLEMS IN THE OVERALL ENFORCEMENT OF CUSTOMS LAWS, DOES HAVETHE WILL AND ABILITY TO MAK

A SERIOUS CONTRIBUTION TO CONTROL OF NARCOTICS TRAFFIC. CUSTOMS PROPOSES TO ASSIGN 70 MEN TO NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT. THIRTEEN OF THESE MEN WILL FORM A CENTRAL UNIT IN BOGOTA WHICH WILL WORK THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY ON A SELECTIVE BASIS. THE REMAINDER WILL BE ASSIGNED TO THE 19 CUSTOMS DISTRICTS. WITH EMBASSY ASSISTANCE, CUSTOMS HAS IMPROVED AND EXPANDED THEIR NARCOTICS TRAINING PROGRAM.
PLANS ARE PRESENTLY IN MOTION TO SEND FOUR MANAGEMENT LEVEL CUSTOMS
OFFICERS TO THE U. S. FOR FIVE WEEKS NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT TRAINING. ALSO PLANNED IS AN IN- COUNTRY NARCOTICS TRAINING PROGRAM FOR CUSTOMS
SPONSORED BY THE USG. CUSTOMS AND NATIONAL POLICE HAVE ESTABLISHED HISTORY OF COOPERATION AND ALL INDICATIONS ARE THAT IT WILL CONTINUE. CUSTOMS AND DAS HAVE HAD THEIR DIFFERENCES BUT THEY DO COOPERATE. WE BELIEVE THAT BY THE PREPARATION OF A NARCOTICS PLAN AND ITS INTENTION TO SUBMIT IT TO THE NATIONAL NARCOTICS COORDINATOR ASAP IS AN INDICATION OF WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE IN A NATIONAL EFFORT. THE COOPERATION OF COLOMBIAN CUSTOMS WITH U. S. CUSTOMS REPRESENTATIVES ASSIGNED TO THE EMBASSY WHILE STILL IN THE INITIAL STAGES ARE PROGRESSING FAVORABLY. BASED ON THE ACTIONS ALREADY TAKEN BY CUSTOMS, IT IS BELIEVED THAT WITH ADDITIONAL

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RESOURCES AND TRAINING THE WILLINGNESS AND ABILITY OF CUSTOMS EFFECTIVELY TO INTERDICT NARCOTICS WILL BE GREATLY INCREASED.

5. EMBASSY SHARES THE SKEPTICISM OF THE COMMITTEE REGARDING THE COMMITMENT OF DAS LEADERSHIP IN CERTAIN AREAS OF NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT. THERE ARE OTHER AREAS, HOWEVER, WHERE DAS ASSISTANCE
IS BASIC TO OUR EFFORTS. ONLY DAS HAS THE LEGAL CAPABILITY TO EXPEL FOREIGNERS FROM COLOMBIA. DAS HAS COOPERATED REASONABLY WELL HERE
AND IF DAS DECIDED NOT TO HELP US IN THIS AREA, IT COULD CRIPPLE OUR EFFORTS. BNDD AGENTS ASSIGNED TO THE EMBASSY HAVE ACHIEVED SOME SUCCESS IN OBTAINING DAS COOPERATION AT THE SECOND AND THIRD ECHELON. AT THIS TIME THERE EXISTS SOME COOPERATION BETWEEN DAS AND OTHER AGENCIES. TO CUT OUT ALL ASSISTANCE TO DAS COULD CREATE A SITUATION WHERE THE ADMITTEDLY IMPERFECT COOPERATION COULD DETERIORATE AND DAMAGE OUR OVERALL EFFORT.
SACCIO
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